

AMSAT News Service Weekly Bulletins

Issue: ANS-130 SPECIAL

Date: 2011-05-10

Sources: amsat-ans-2011-ans-130-special.txt

SB SAT @ AMSAT \$ANS-130.01

AMSAT News Service Special Bulletin - ARISSat-1 Update

AMSAT News Service Bulletin 130.01

>From AMSAT HQ SILVER SPRING, MD.

May 10, 2011

To All RADIO AMATEURS

BID: \$ANS-130.01

The ARISSat-1 satellite was intended to be activated in April as part of the 50th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin's famous flight. However, no ground stations reported hearing the satellite. To follow up, the ARISSat-1 team had a teleconference with representatives of RSC-Energia (Russia) and NASA to request a clarification of the events and discuss what happened.

According to RSC-Energia, the battery in ARISSat-1 was only charged once on the ground and was then used for a variety of tests and during the February activation event. It was not recharged prior to the April Yuri Gagarin activity since it can only be charged a limited number of times on the ISS.

The cosmonauts reported that they activated the satellite and confirmed that they heard the signal on the ham radio equipment on board the ISS. Since the battery was nearly depleted of its original charge, they switched the satellite off after six hours of operation in order to prevent over-discharging the battery. The battery was then removed from the satellite and stored separately as per their normal battery handling procedures. For more information on this battery, please see the JAN/FEB 2011 AMSAT Journal.

RSC-Energia reported that their plan is to recharge the battery about three weeks prior to the EVA deployment. This will give the cosmonauts time to reinstall the battery and test the satellite to make sure it is working properly. The EVA deployment is planned for late July of this year.

[ANS thanks AMSAT Vice-President of Engineering, Tony Monteiro, AA2TX for the above information]

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